

Message Text

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53

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

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R 141412Z MAY 75

FM AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1121

INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON

CONFIDENTIAL PONTA DELGADA 133

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PIAT, POS

SUBJECT: AZOREAN GOVERNORS CONFER ON REGIONAL ADMINISTRATIVE
REORGANIZATION

1. FOLLOWING MAY 9 REPORTS THAT, AS PART OF MINISTRY OF
INTERNAL ADMINISTRATION PLAN FOR NATIONWIDE
ADMINISTRATIVE DECENTRALIZATION, THREE AZOREAN DISTRICTS WILL BE
MERGED INTO SINGLE PROVINCE, DISTRICT CIVIL GOVERNORS MET BEHIND
CLOSED DOORS IN PONTA DELGADA BEGINNING MAY 10.

2. APPARENTLY ANGRY OVER SECRECY SURROUNDING MEETING, LOCAL
PRESS HAS CRITICIZED BOTH SUBSTANCE OF MINISTRY PLAN AND MANNER
IN WHICH IT PREPARED. PRESS NOTES SIMILARITIES BETWEEN KNOWN
DETAILS NEW PLAN AND THOSE OF PROJECT FOR REFORM AZOREAN
ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE DRAFTED BY "GROUP OF ELEVEN" UNDER
AUSPICES PONTA DELGADA CIVIL GOVERNOR ANTONIO BORGE SCOUTINHO
LAST MARCH (SEE PONTA DELGADA 37). DRAFT WAS WIDELY CRITICIZED
AT TIME FOR INADEQUACY ITS GUARANTEES LOCAL ADMINISTRATIVE AND
FINANCIAL AUTONOMY. PRESS ALSO DECRYES FACT THAT NEW PLAN PREPARED
BY CENTRAL GOVERNMENT WITHOUT CONSULTING AZOREANS WHILE
FINAL DETAILS NOW BEING WORKED OUT AT DISTRICT GOVERNMENT LEVEL
WITHOUT POPULAR PARTICIPATION. ONE PAPER RHETORICALLY ASKS IF
AZOREAN PEOPLE "REALY COUNT FOR ANYTHING".

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3. COMMENT: ONE POINT ON WHICH VIRTUALLY ALL AZOREANS AGREE

IS THAT, SHOULD ISLANDS REMAIN PORTUGUESE, THEY MUST BE GUARANTEED EFFECTIVE, BROAD BASED ADMINISTRATIVE AND ECONOMIC AUTONOMY. "GROUP OF ELEVEN" PLAN WAS CRITICIZED HERE EXACTLY BECAUSE IT DID NOT GO FAR ENOUGH IN THIS DIRECTION. IF MINISTRY OF INTERNAL ADMINISTRATION PLAN IS, IN FACT, SIMILAR TO THAT OF "GROUP OF ELEVEN", IT WILL ENCOUNTER STRONG RESISTANCE IN AZORES. IF THIS RESISTANCE IGNORED AND SUCH A PLAN FORCED ON AZOREANS IT WILL BE SEEN AS ONE MORE EXAMPLE OF CONTINENTAL INSENSITIVITY TO LOCAL FEELINGS AND INTERESTS AND WILL FUEL SEPERATEST FEELINGS THROUGH OUT ARCHIPELAGO. PARRIS

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